

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----099751 281645Z /50

P R 281606Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2665
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINC EUR VAHINGEN
USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 17985

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW
SUBJECT: REPORT ON DIRECT SOVIET-FRG CONTACT REGARDING
MBFR

REFS: (A) BONN 10475; (B) BONN 17416

SUMMARY: A WEST GERMAN INTELLECTUAL HAS TOLD US THAT HIS
MOST RECENT CONTACT WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS HERE SUGGESTS
THAT THE SOVIETS MAY BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN MBFR AS
A DEVICE FOR ARRESTING WESTERN TECHNICAL PROGRESS IN
ARMS -- AND SPECIFICALLY THE NEUTRON WARHEAD. END
SUMMARY.

1. A WEST GERMAN PROFESSOR WHO EARLIER SERVED AS AN
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INTERMEDIARY ON MBFR BETWEEN THE SOVIET EMBASSY AND THE
FRG (REF A) HAS TOLD US THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN
AGAIN CONTACTED HIM ABOUT A MONTH AGO.

2. ACCORDING TO THE PROFESSOR, FALIN AGAIN COMPLAINED
THAT THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS APPEARED TO BE ON DEAD
CENTER. FALIN FRETTEED ABOUT THE WESTERN INSISTENCE ON

PARITY AND AGAIN SAID THAT THE ALLEGED 150,000 SOVIET PREPONDERANCE RESULTED FROM LOGISTIC PERSONNEL AND DID NOT, THEREFORE, REPRESENT A MILITARY IMBALANCE. FALIN GAVE THE PROFESSOR THE IMPRESSION THAT HE (FALIN) WISHED THAT THERE WERE SOME WAY IN WHICH THE 150,000 COULD BE DEALT WITH.

3. THE PROFESSOR ALSO SAID THAT FALIN, AS HE HAD BEFORE, RECOGNIZED THE TRAP INTO WHICH THE SOVIET UNION HAD FALLEN BY THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAD SUBMITTED THE NUMBERS IN VIENNA. NOW, THE PROFESSOR OBSERVED, THE SOVIET UNION COULD NOT DEAL HONESTLY WITH THE PROBLEM OF IMBALANCE BECAUSE IT HAS PRETENDED THAT NO IMBALANCE EXISTS.

4. THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE PROFESSOR AND FALIN APPARENTLY ENDED INCONCLUSIVELY, BUT WAS FOLLOWED BY AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE PROFESSOR AND A SOVIET VISITOR FROM MOSCOW WHOM THE PROFESSOR CHOSE TO IDENTIFY TO US ONLY AS A "MILITARY EXPERT." THAT EXPERT SPOKE TO THE PROFESSOR AT LENGTH ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF THE EUROPEAN BALANCE OF FORCES. DURING THE COURSE OF THIS CONVERSATION, THE PROFESSOR SAID THAT THE SOVIET PREPONDERANCE IN MANPOWER WAS FORCING THE WEST TO STRIVE EVER MORE RAPIDLY FOR TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS. THEREUPON, THE RUSSIAN ASKED WHETHER THE WEST WOULD CURTAIL ITS SECRET

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EFFORTS AT TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS IF THE SOVIET UNION WERE PREPARED TO REDUCE ITS NUMERICAL PREPONDERANCE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE SOVIET MILITARY EXPERT SPECIFICALLY CITED THE NEUTRON WARHEAD.

5. FROM THESE CONVERSATIONS, THE PROFESSOR CONCLUDED THAT THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY IN VIENNA BECAUSE IT HAD ACHIEVED A GOOD STRATEGIC POSITION IN EUROPE WITH THE SS-20 AND WITH ITS CURRENT LEVEL OF TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT AND BECAUSE IT FEARED THAT THE NEXT WESTERN ROUND OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS (PGM'S, CRUISE MISSILES, THE NEUTRON WARHEAD, ETC.) WOULD COMPEL THE SOVIETS TO SCRAMBLE HARD TO CATCH UP AGAIN. (OF COURSE, ONE COULD ALSO CONCLUDE THAT THE SOVIETS WERE ATTEMPTING TO USE ACTIVITY IN TROOP REDUCTION TALKS MERELY AS A TACTICAL DEVICE TO STOP THE NEUTRON WARHEAD.)

6. THE PROFESSOR ADDED THAT HE HAD PASSED THE GIST OF THESE CONVERSATIONS TO THE CHANCELLERY.

7. COMMENT: AS WITH THE LAST REPORT FROM THIS

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-----099699 281646Z /50

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN
USNMR SHAPE

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EXDIS

PARTICULAR SOURCE, WE ARE UNABLE TO EVALUATE ITS
PRECISION ALTHOUGH THE PROFESSOR INVOLVED HAS LONG
EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY MATTERS.

8. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE WHETHER THESE
EXCHANGES HAVE HAD ANY IMPACT ON THE GERMAN POSITION
IN MBFR AND ON THE ER WARHEAD. HOWEVER, ONE CAN
SPECULATE THAT THE FRG COULD CONCLUDE FROM THESE EX-
CHANGES THAT A DELAYED DECISION ON THE NEUTRON WARHEAD
COULD HELP ACTIVATE THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS EVEN IF THE
NEUTRON WARHEAD ITSELF WERE NOT DIRECTLY A PART OF THE
NEGOTIATIONS. SUCH AN ANALYSIS WOULD INCREASE THE
COALITION LEADERS' INCLINATIONS TO FIGHT HARD IN THE
UPCOMING PARTY CONGRESSES AGAINST RESOLUTIONS THAT WOULD
CIRCUMSCRIBE THE FRG'S ABILITY TO MOVE TOWARD DEPLOY-
MENT OF THE NEUTRON WEAPONS ON GERMAN SOIL (REF B).
AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THAT ANALYSIS MIGHT ALSO HELP
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INCLINE THE FRG TO POSTPONE A DECISION ON SUCH DEPLOY-
MENT UNTIL THE POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPLOITING
THIS INSTRUMENT IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN
EXPLORED.
STOESSEL

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